UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

The University is reviewing its Grievance arrangements. During the review, the University's current arrangements are to be interpreted and applied in a manner consistent with the University's various legislative and regulatory duties, including its responsibilities under the E6 condition of registration and the relevant parts of the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023 (both of which came into force on 1 August 2025) and the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, as amended by the Employment Rights Act 2025 and set out in the Whistleblowing Policy.

In the case of any conflict between this policy and the provisions of the University's Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech, the latter will take precedence as set out in section 5.1 of the Code.

For further information on the new legislation, please see the Governance and Compliance Division website.

Grievance Policy

for unestablished academic and academic-related staff, research staff and assistant staff

(1 August 2025)

Grievance Policy

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1 Statement of Policy

1.1 The University recognises that employees may, from time to time, have concerns or complaints about their work, working relationships or working environment. In this event employees can raise a grievance under this policy, unless the matter is subject to other agreed procedures.

1.2 This policy sets out informal and formal processes to follow when an employee has a grievance. The University aims to deal with grievances promptly, fairly, consistently, and without unreasonable delay. It will carry out necessary investigations, meet with the employee to discuss their grievance, and inform them of the outcome. An employee has the right to appeal any formal decision if they are not satisfied.

1.3 The University encourages individuals and managers to make every effort to resolve problems informally in the first instance as this is often the most effective method of addressing grievances. However, if the issue is serious, or has not been resolved in this way, a formal grievance may be raised.

1.4 This policy is not contractual and may be amended from time to time, in light of changes in legislation or operational requirements.

2 Content and Scope

2.1 Grievances may involve a wide range of issues. For example: work relationships, bullying, harassment, discrimination, terms and conditions of employment, working practices, health and safety, and the working environment.

2.2 For grievances relating to bullying, harassment, discrimination, sexual misconduct, or other inappropriate behaviour, this procedure should be read in conjunction with the Dignity at Work Policy (2023 ed.) and its Code of Behaviour, which set out the behaviour expected and provides details of the support available. The Grievance Policy sets out the informal and formal resolution processes for all forms of grievance including those arising from the Dignity at Work Policy (2023 ed.).

2.3 This policy sits alongside the fundamental principles contained in the University's Statement on Freedom of Speech.

2.4 The grievance procedure should not be used to complain about a dismissal or disciplinary action. In these cases, employees should submit an appeal under the procedures set out in the relevant disciplinary policy.

2.5 Where an employee raises a grievance during a disciplinary process, the disciplinary process may in some cases be temporarily suspended in order to deal with the grievance. Where the grievance and disciplinary cases are related, it may be appropriate to deal with both issues concurrently.

2.6 Depending on the nature of the complaint, it may be more appropriate to deal with the matter under the appropriate disciplinary procedure. If it is unclear, an initial fact-finding exercise will be undertaken to determine which procedure is the most appropriate to follow. Advice is available from the HR Business Partnering team[1].

2.7 If a grievance relates to a process which includes an appeal procedure (e.g. grading, flexible working, Academic Career Pathways), employees are directed to use that appeal procedure.

2.8 The University operates a separate Whistleblowing Policy to enable employees to report illegal activities, wrongdoing or malpractice. However, employees who are directly affected by the matter in question or feel that they have been victimised for having blown the whistle, are entitled to raise the matter under this policy.

2.9 Where the complaint concerns behaviour by a relevant third party such as a visitor, a College employee, or a contractor, it will be dealt with under this policy as far as reasonably possible, with the University seeking to engage with the third party accordingly.

2.10 Employees who wish to raise a complaint against a student should contact their local HR team or HR Business Partnering team in the first instance who will liaise with OSCCA (Office of Student Conduct, Complaints & Appeals) to agree an appropriate course of action. They can also contact OSCCA directly.

2.11 This policy applies to group grievances, i.e. where more than one person is raising the same grievance. However, it does not apply to collective issues that are the subject of negotiation or consultation with the trade unions.

2.12 This policy forms part of the University's single comprehensive source of information (SCSI), which brings together information for current and prospective students and staff about how the University prevents and responds to harassment and sexual misconduct. It includes clear information about the University's policies, how to get support, how to raise concerns, and what to expect from the processes followed by the University. Staff should familiarise themselves with the SCSI so they can help signpost students and understand their responsibilities in creating and maintaining an inclusive community, where students, staff and other persons are able to report behaviour that may amount to harassment and/or sexual misconduct and know this will be taken seriously.

[1] The term relevant HR Business Partnering Team used throughout this policy and procedure refers to the central HR Teams allocated to Schools, UAS and Non-School Institutions. This role may be delegated by prior agreement to a member of a local HR team.

3 Eligibility

3.1 Save where expressly excluded, this policy applies to employees in the assistant, contract research and unestablished academic and academic-related categories who wish to raise a grievance (the "Employee") and replaces all previous University grievance procedures relating to those categories for grievances raised on or after 20 June 2023.

3.2 This policy does not apply to:

- University officers or established members of staff, who should refer to the Schedule to Statute C, Chapter III, and Special Ordinance C (xii) of Statutes and Ordinances where the equivalent grievance procedures are set out.
- Self-employed contractors, agency or casual workers. UPS and TES workers should refer to the complaints procedure as set out in the relevant handbook.
- University clinicians (including clinical consultants, junior doctors, nurses, midwives and all allied health professionals) who should refer to the separate clinical grievance guidance and the Clinical School HR team in the first instance for further guidance.

4 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 **An eligible employee** who wishes to raise a grievance has a responsibility to do so in a timely manner, as set out in section 6.6.1, and should be willing to participate constructively in an open discussion of the issues raised, whether at the informal or formal stage of a grievance.

4.2 **Those responsible for leading, managing and supervising employees** should be aware of an employee's right to raise a grievance under this policy, support those employees in raising issues and facilitate informal resolution.

4.3 **Members of the local HR team, the relevant part of the central HR Business Partnering Team, or the Case Management Team** are responsible for giving timely professional advice to employees and managers on the implementation of this policy and its procedure. They should support the timely resolution of the issues raised, whether at the informal or formal stage of a grievance.

4.4 **The Responsible Person** should deal with the grievance in a timely manner, and reach a decision as to the outcome, in accordance with the procedure and principles set out in sections 5 and 6, ensuring there is clear, regular and confidential communication with all parties.

4.5 **The Investigator** should thoroughly investigate the issues raised in the grievance in accordance with the procedure and principles set out in sections 5 and 6.

4.6 **The Appeal Manager** should deal with any grievance appeal, including considering the facts of the case and reaching a decision as to the appeal

outcome, in accordance with the procedure and principles set out in sections 5 and 6.

4.7 **The Companion or Trade Union Representative** accompanying the Complainant should support the employee when preparing for and attending the grievance meeting, in accordance with the procedure set out in section 5.

4.8 **The Notetaker** should prepare the summary notes from the formal meetings (and informal meetings if appropriate) in accordance with the procedure and principles set out in sections 5 and 6.

4.9 **All roles** set out above should also maintain the confidentiality of any grievance process in line with this policy and, in particular, as set out in section 6.5.

5 Procedure

5.1 Informal resolution

5.1.1 Many issues can be resolved quickly and informally through a discussion between the Employee and their line manager, or any other individual concerned, in the course of everyday working relationships. Where the line manager is the subject of the issues raised, an Employee should discuss their concerns with a more senior manager, their local HR team or their HR Business Partnering Team.

5.1.2 Where the nature of the concern only involves the Employee themselves, they can raise the matter informally with their immediate line manager in the first instance. The line manager will discuss the Employee's concerns with them in confidence, make discreet investigations as appropriate, and attempt to address their concerns fairly and promptly.

5.1.3 Where the nature of the concern affects the Employee’s personal dealings or relationships with other employees, the Employee can choose either an informal direct approach, in which the individual addresses the issue themselves, or an informal approach with support, where the process is facilitated through the support of others.

5.1.4 An Employee may decide at any point in the informal resolution process to raise a formal grievance if they wish to (see 5.5).

5.2 Direct informal resolution process

5.2.1 If the Employee feels able to approach the other party directly, they should:

- do so at the earliest opportunity
- approach the other party in person or in writing
- provide specific examples of the unwanted behaviour

- explain why this has made them feel uncomfortable
- explain what their desired outcome is, or what possible solutions might be.

In many cases this may resolve the issue without the need for further action and it may be possible to agree a constructive way of working in the future.

5.2.2 Support is available to help the Employee prepare what they want to say, from the person responsible for HR in their area, their HR Business Partnering Team, Dignity at Work Contacts or their trade union representatives.

5.3 Informal resolution process with support

5.3.1 An Employee can also ask for support to achieve an informal resolution from their line manager, a more senior manager or the person responsible for HR in their area. The Dignity at Work Policy (2023 ed.) details further support options for issues involving bullying, harassment, discrimination, sexual misconduct and other inappropriate behaviour.

5.3.2 The person approached by the Employee under 5.3.1 may request to meet separately with both parties to discuss the situation. They will establish the circumstances, identify the impact on the Employee, any steps already taken to address the issue, and (if applicable) the response of the other party.

5.3.3 They will then seek to agree a course of action with the Employee. This could involve facilitating a meeting between both parties. The spirit of such a meeting should focus on understanding the reason why the issue has been raised and how it can be resolved, exploring how it might be avoided in the future.

5.4 Mediation and Facilitated Discussions

5.4.1 Mediation is a well-established, confidential process for resolving issues and improving working relationships between individuals. It is voluntary and can be used at any time, including during or after an informal or a formal process. The mediation process normally takes around a day, including a preliminary meeting with each party. Further information about this option is available from the University Mediation Service. The University Mediation Service is also able to offer a shorter facilitated discussion between the two parties involving an impartial facilitator. Provided both parties wish to participate, a request for mediation or a facilitated discussion can be made to the University Mediation Service.

5.5 Formal resolution

5.5.1 If it is not possible to resolve an issue informally, or if the matter is serious, the Employee should raise a formal grievance without unreasonable delay with their Head of Institution[2]. This should:

- be submitted in writing
- set out the nature of the grievance including any relevant facts, dates and names of individuals involved
- focus on particular events or actions
- avoid using insulting or abusive language
- refer to any attempts at informal resolution
- include any desired outcome.

5.5.2 The Head of Institution or a suitably experienced manager (as delegated by the Head of Institution) will be responsible for hearing the grievance and will be referred to throughout the procedure as "the Responsible Person". The Responsible Person should have no conflict of interest with the grievance. A suitably experienced manager is one that has had no prior involvement in the case and has the appropriate experience to be able to evaluate the issues under investigation. The Responsible Person will be supported throughout the procedure by a member of the HR Business Partnering or Case Management Team who will provide procedural advice.

5.5.3 Where a Head of Institution is the subject of the grievance, the Employee should direct their complaint to the Chair of the Faculty Board or Chair of the relevant Council of the School, whichever is appropriate, who will act as the Responsible Person. If the grievance concerns a Head of a General Board or Council institution, it should be directed to the Academic Secretary or the Registrary, whichever is appropriate, who will act as the Responsible Person.

5.6 Formal Grievance Meeting

5.6.1 The Responsible Person will invite the Employee to a formal grievance meeting. The grievance meeting should be held without unreasonable delay and the Employee should make every effort to attend. The Employee may be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative at this meeting.

5.6.2 The purpose of the meeting is to allow the Employee to explain their grievance in more detail and how they suggest it could be resolved. The meeting should be conciliatory rather than adversarial in nature and remain focused on the resolution of the Employee's grievance. The Employee must provide any

[2] The term Head of Institution used throughout this policy and procedure refers to Heads of Departments and of other academic institutions, Chairs of Faculty Boards not divided into Departments, and the administrative Heads of Institutions.

evidence in support of their grievance within a reasonable timeframe. Failure to do so may result in a decision being made on the evidence available.

5.6.3 Following the formal grievance meeting, it will usually be necessary to conduct an investigation, which may be a brief fact-finding exercise or may involve the preparation of a formal report depending upon the nature of the matter raised. The Responsible Person may carry out the investigation themselves or appoint someone from within or outside the department, or someone external, to do so (the “Investigator”).

5.6.4 The Investigator will meet with the Employee again if necessary and any other individuals as they see appropriate (the “Interviewees”), including any individual against whom the complaint is made, referred to as “the Respondent”. The Respondent and any Interviewees will be entitled to submit any relevant documentary evidence to the person investigating within a reasonable timeframe.

5.6.5 The content of the Employee’s grievance should only be disclosed to the Respondent and other Interviewees, to the extent that is necessary for the Respondent to understand the allegations against them and to enable a reasonable and comprehensive investigation to take place. While parts of the written grievance may need to be shown to the Respondent or other Interviewees, it may be necessary to redact other parts, and the reasons for this will be explained if required (see 6.9).

5.6.6 The Investigator will be supported throughout the investigation by a member of the HR Business Partnering or Case Management Team who will provide procedural advice.

5.6.7 Any investigation should be conducted without unreasonable delay. Where there are unavoidable delays, all parties should be kept informed of progress.

5.6.8 A note of any investigation meeting will normally be made by a separate notetaker, or the HR Representative attending the meeting. Interviewees should be aware that the meeting notes will form part of the Investigator’s findings and may be used in any subsequent formal procedures such as disciplinary procedures.

5.6.9 The Investigator will document their findings, detailing the facts established and attaching any relevant meeting notes and documentary evidence collected as part of their investigation. Where a separate investigator has been appointed, this should be submitted to the Responsible Person without unreasonable delay. The Responsible Person will carefully consider all the evidence.

5.7 Decision

5.7.1 The Responsible Person will re-convene the formal grievance meeting with the Employee to discuss the findings made. In most cases, such findings will be in the form of a formal investigation report, unless it has been possible to determine the outcome with a brief fact-finding exercise. Any such report or findings will usually be sent to the Employee, together with any relevant evidence, in advance of the meeting. In some circumstances it may be necessary to redact some documents and/or meeting notes (see 6.9).

5.7.2 The Responsible Person may also meet with the Respondent separately, if they (the Responsible Person) think it is necessary or appropriate. A copy of any relevant parts of the findings and/or relevant evidence will be provided to the Respondent in advance of any such meeting.

5.7.3 At or after the formal grievance meeting (or re-convened meeting as appropriate), the Responsible Person will decide on the outcome of the grievance and what action will be taken to resolve the issue(s) (where appropriate).

5.7.4 The Responsible Person will provide written confirmation of their decision to the Employee (and any Respondent) without unreasonable delay and wherever possible within 10 working days of the grievance meeting (or re-convened meeting as appropriate). The letter should set out clearly the outcome and any action that is to be taken to resolve the grievance. The Employee will also be informed that they can appeal if they are not satisfied with the outcome.

5.7.5 Where the grievance is upheld, the Responsible Person may, in consultation with the relevant HR Business Partnering or Case Management Team, instigate appropriate measures such as:

- the requirement to attend training
- disciplinary procedures (the investigation report may be used in the disciplinary process)
- steps to resolve the issues (whether or not the grievance is upheld), for instance a referral to the University Mediation Service to restore working relationships with the agreement of both parties.

5.7.6 Actions taken to resolve a grievance may have an impact on other individuals, including the Respondent. The Respondent should be informed separately of any aspect of the decision that affects them and the reasons for it. While confidentiality is of key importance in handling any grievance, in some circumstances there may be other individuals who may need to know the outcome, or certain aspects of the outcome that will impact on them. For example, a change to operating procedures or reporting lines. The Employee should be informed of who else will be told about the decision and the type of information they will be given, but they will not be entitled to information about any disciplinary process that may be commenced against the Respondent or other individual as a result of the grievance; this will be confidential to the

Respondent or other individual as relevant. Further information can be found at How we use your personal information.

5.7.7 If the grievance highlights any issues concerning policies, procedures or conduct (even if not sufficiently serious to merit separate disciplinary procedures) they should be addressed as soon as possible. Any action taken should be monitored and reviewed, as appropriate, so that it deals effectively with the issues.

5.7.8 If the Responsible Person considers that the grievance is malicious or vexatious, they may instigate a disciplinary process in relation to the Employee. This will not be appropriate where a grievance is mistaken or otherwise ill-founded but is not malicious or vexatious.

5.8 The Appeal Procedure

5.8.1 Should the Employee who raised the grievance wish to appeal the formal outcome of their grievance, they should appeal in writing within 10 working days, wherever possible, of the receipt of the outcome letter, to the Director of Human Resources. The Employee should set out the grounds of appeal and state whether the appeal is in respect of the whole or in respect of any specified part of any finding of fact or decision.

Assistant staff

5.8.2 Assistant staff have the choice between having their appeal heard by an Appeal Manager (as defined below) or by a USJB (University Staff Joint Board) Appeal Panel. The Employee should make their choice clear in their appeal letter.

USJB Appeal Panel

5.8.3 The USJB Appeal Panel consists of two management members and two trade union members, one of the management members will be the Chair. The management members will be members of the USJB. Panel members should not have any conflict of interest with the grievance. If the Employee is accompanied by a trade union representative, the union panel members will, wherever possible, not be from the same union. The membership of the panel is agreed by the Vice-Chancellor.

5.8.4 The Secretary to the USJB will appoint a Lead HR Business Partner or Head of Case Management to be the Secretary of the USJB Appeal Panel. The Secretary will provide procedural advice to the panel.

Unestablished academic and academic-related staff including contract research staff, and assistant staff who choose to have an Appeal Manager

5.8.5 The Director of Human Resources will, without unreasonable delay appoint someone to hear the appeal, who shall be a manager of equivalent or greater seniority than the Responsible Person, and who is impartial and has had no prior involvement in the case (the “Appeal Manager”). An HR representative will be appointed to provide procedural advice to the Appeal Manager.

All staff

5.8.6 During the appeal proceedings, the Employee will not be entitled, except with the agreement of the Appeal Manager or USJB Appeal Panel Chair, to rely on any grounds of appeal not specified in their written appeal.

5.8.7 Where the appeal directly affects a fellow employee, that person should be advised of it, the likely timescale for considering it and its eventual outcome. If new information is required from them in relation to the grounds of appeal in order to decide the outcome, they will be provided with the necessary information and an opportunity to respond on those points. As with the initial decision, the Employee should be told if anyone else will be informed about the appeal decision and the type of information they will be given.

5.8.8 An appeal hearing should be arranged without unreasonable delay.

5.8.9 An HR Representative may attend to take notes of the appeal hearing.

5.8.10 The Employee may make representations in person and/or in writing at the appeal hearing. Copies of the investigation summary, outcome letter and any supporting documentation should be supplied to all parties in good time ahead of the hearing. The Appeal Manager or USJB Appeal Panel will receive a full set of documents relied upon in the Responsible Person’s decision.

5.8.11 Unless the Employee has indicated they do not wish to make representations in person, they must make every effort to attend the hearing. If they fail to attend without good reason, or are persistently unable to do so, the Appeal Manager or USJB Appeal Panel may proceed on the evidence available in the Employee’s absence. The Employee may be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative at this meeting.

5.8.12 Others involved in the investigation (e.g. the Responsible Person, the Investigator or the Interviewees), may be asked to attend the appeal hearing by the Appeal Manager or USJB Appeal Panel, if there are any questions that the Appeal Manager or USJB Appeal Panel wishes to ask them.

5.8.13 The Appeal Manager or USJB Appeal Panel Chair may set time-limits for each stage of the proceedings, including the hearing itself, so that any appeal will be heard and determined as expeditiously as is reasonably practicable. The appeal hearing may be adjourned to gather further information, provided that any adjournment will not lead to unreasonable delay.

5.8.14 Following the appeal hearing, the Appeal Manager or USJB Appeal Panel will consider the facts of the case and may uphold or dismiss the appeal, in whole or in part.

5.8.15 The Appeal Manager or USJB Appeal Panel Chair will notify the Employee of their decision in writing, setting out reasons for the decision. This should occur without unreasonable delay and wherever possible within 10 working days of the appeal hearing. A copy of the letter will be sent to the Director of Human Resources. The Respondent should be advised of any parts of the decision relevant to them.

5.8.16 The Appeal Manager or USJB Appeal Panel may decide to vary the above procedure as they deem appropriate, provided the appeal is dealt with fairly and impartially and without unreasonable delay.

5.8.17 There is no further right to appeal.

6 General Principles

6.1 At any stage of the procedure, those involved in attempting a resolution or in investigating a complaint must act fairly and in accordance with good practice and the principles set out below. Any person against whom a complaint has been made has the right to know the nature and sufficient details of the complaint in order to respond. It is important that no decision is taken until the complaint has been investigated and any Respondent has had the opportunity to respond. All persons involved in the procedure should be fully conversant with the procedure and guidance contained in this document.

6.2 Communication

6.2.1 The Responsible Person must ensure there is clear, regular and confidential communication with the Employee and anyone else involved in the grievance throughout the process. This helps to avoid misunderstandings, stress or other mental health issues, and further action, such as subsequent grievances.

6.3 Formal meetings

6.3.1 It is recommended that at least 5 working days' notice is given to attend any meeting under the formal resolution process, including investigation meetings, grievance meetings and appeal hearings.

6.3.2 Where circumstances require it, and in particular, to avoid delay, the meeting or hearing may be held by way of video or teleconference with the agreement of all parties but it will not be recorded.

6.4 Companions

6.4.1 The Employee may be accompanied by a work colleague, a trade union representative or an official employed by a trade union, to any meetings under the formal resolution process. A trade union representative who is not an employed official must have been certified by their union as being competent to accompany an Employee. The Employee should provide enough time for the University to deal with the companion's attendance at the meeting and in good time ahead of any meeting.

6.4.2 If the chosen companion is unavailable at the time the University has proposed for the meeting, the Employee must notify the HR Representative supporting the grievance immediately so that an alternative time can be arranged. The University will postpone the hearing to a time proposed by the Employee provided that the alternative time is reasonable and ideally not more than five working days after the date originally proposed. The Employee should bear in mind the practicalities of the arrangements and seek to avoid choosing a companion whose availability will unduly delay the process.

6.4.3 The companion will be required to maintain appropriate confidentiality.

6.4.4 The companion will be allowed to address the meeting, to put and sum up the Employee's case, respond on behalf of the Employee to any views expressed at the meeting and confer with the Employee during the meeting. The companion does not, however, have the right to answer questions on the Employee's behalf, address the hearing if the Employee does not wish it or prevent the employer from explaining their case.

6.4.5 A companion does not have to agree to attend a meeting if invited. The role is voluntary. They will receive paid time off work to attend the meeting.

6.4.6 It may also be appropriate to permit any Respondent to be accompanied at meetings under the formal resolution procedure.

6.5 Confidentiality

6.5.1 In order to safeguard individuals, confidentiality must be strictly respected and information limited to those who need to know (and only to the extent necessary) for the purposes of the operation of these procedures and for maintenance of good order in the University. The University reserves the right to seek advice from its advisors or to involve appropriate external authorities if it believes that it is under an obligation to do so. Any breach of confidentiality by any party may result in disciplinary action being instigated.

6.6 Timescales

6.6.1 The Employee should make a complaint in a timely fashion (normally immediately after the incident or at the latest within three months of the most recent incident or occurrence of the behaviour complained about). If there is good reason, this timeframe can be extended, for example where a complainant does not feel able to make a complaint without initial support or counselling.

6.6.2 Grievances should be resolved without unreasonable delay in the interests of all parties. Where there are unavoidable delays, the Responsible Person should explain the reasons for the delay and keep all parties informed of progress. If anyone involved has concerns about the timeframes, they should raise them with the HR representative supporting the grievance.

6.7 Conflict of interest

6.7.1 A conflict of interest exists when the duties owed by an individual to the University conflict with, or may possibly conflict with a personal, financial or other interest or duty that the individual holds and/or with the interests of someone who has a close personal connection to the individual (including, but not limited to, any children, in-laws, siblings, partner or spouse). If any party has concerns about conflicts of interest, they should raise them immediately with the HR representative dealing with the case to be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

6.8 Recording of meetings

6.8.1 Meetings held under this policy should not be electronically recorded (whether audio or video) by any party. Any such recordings made without consent may result in disciplinary action.

6.8.2 Instead, there should be someone present to take a note of the meeting and attendees will be given the opportunity to comment on their accuracy. The meeting notes will provide a summary of the key discussion points and are not intended to be verbatim.

6.8.3 Any person interviewed during the investigation will be sent a copy of the notes of the meeting and asked to confirm it is a factually accurate note of their interview. Any proposed amendments should be received by the person investigating within 5 working days of the Interviewee receiving the meeting notes.

6.8.4 Where it is not possible to agree a single note, both versions will be provided to the Responsible Person (where this is not the person investigating).

6.8.5 In exceptional circumstances, names and identities of Interviewees may be kept confidential and not disclosed to a party, for instance in cases where there is a

genuine risk of physical harm or retaliation. If any Interviewee has concerns about revealing their identity, they should raise this with the person investigating without delay, so that a view may be reached with the assistance of the relevant HR Business Partnering or Case Management Team.

6.9 Redacting

6.9.1 In some circumstances it may be necessary to redact documents and/or meeting notes. Redacting may happen when information is presented that is not directly relevant to the grievance or its relevant context and which could cause offence, is inflammatory, financially or commercially sensitive, personal data and/or otherwise confidential. Any redacting is usually done by the HR Business Partnering or Case Management team in conjunction with the Responsible Person.

6.10 Decision making

6.10.1 Where evidence is contested or contradictory, the decision as to what happened will be taken on the balance of probabilities, i.e. whether it is more probable than not that a specific incident occurred as described.

6.10.2 What is perceived by one individual as inappropriate behaviour may not necessarily be perceived in the same way by another. When deciding the appropriateness of behaviour, factors that will be taken into consideration include the specific context, the motive or intent of the individual demonstrating the behaviour, the impact on the individual and whether that impact or effect is reasonable in the circumstances and the standards set out in the Code of Behaviour.

6.11 Record keeping

6.11.1 The central HR team will keep a written record of any grievance cases, including: the grievance; any investigation report; the decision and actions taken; the reason for the actions; whether an appeal was lodged; the outcome of the appeal and any subsequent developments. Records will be treated as confidential and be kept no longer than necessary in accordance with the storage limitation principles as set out in the relevant data protection legislation.

6.12 Accessibility and support

6.12.1 If any aspect of the grievance procedure causes an employee or their companion difficulty on account of any disability that they may have, or if they need assistance because English is not their first language, they should raise this

issue with the HR Representative supporting the grievance who will arrange for any reasonable adjustments to be made.

6.12.2 A grievance process can be stressful for everyone involved and different individuals will respond differently to stressful situations. Sometimes a process may cause extreme distress and even impact on a person's mental health. Where there are signs of this happening to anyone involved in the process, the University will consider whether the process can be adjusted in some way and those involved in the process should signpost the individual to support available to them within the University or to their GP, if appropriate.

6.12.3 Further information on support services can be found on the University Wellbeing pages and includes internal and external support providers. Details can also be found in the Dignity at Work Policy (2023 ed.).

6.13 The handling of grievances and training for managers

6.13.1 The handling of grievances can be a sensitive matter, particularly where employees are complaining about another employee, for instance their attitude, or behaviour.

6.13.2 It is recommended that managers attend the training courses aimed at helping them become more confident in dealing with people and handling difficult conversations. For more information, please go to University's Personal and Professional Development (PPD) pages.

6.14 Malicious or vexatious complaints

6.14.1 A vexatious complaint is one that is made solely or mainly to harass, annoy or subdue another person, or something that is unreasonable, without foundation, frivolous, repetitive, deliberately burdensome or unwarranted.

6.14.2 A malicious complaint is one that is made with the intention of causing harm by seeking to defame a colleague or manager, through knowingly providing false or misleading information or withholding information about an incident or issue.

6.15 Overlapping procedures

6.15.1 If a complaint falls across more than one University procedure, the University will deal with the matter as flexibly, fairly and proportionately as possible. In the event that it is not possible to reach a decision about identifying the appropriate procedure to follow through discussion, the matter should be referred to the Director of Human Resources, whose decision will be final.

6.16 Victimisation

6.16.1 Employees must not be treated less favourably because they have made or supported a grievance in good faith.

7 Guidance and Additional Sources

7.1 Links to other related University policies can be found below:

- Dignity at Work Policy (2023 ed.)
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Disciplinary Policies
- University's Statement on Freedom of Speech
- University-wide Conflict of Interest Policy
- University single comprehensive source of information (SCSI)

8 Review

8.1 The policy will be reviewed 12 months after the implementation date and then every 4 years.

Version	Date version came into force	Description of changes
2023	20.06.2023	New combined Grievance policy
1 August 2025 revision	01.08.2025	Updated in line with the introduction of the new duty under the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023. Updated team names

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